

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

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USIA-06 DHA-02 ORM-01 HEW-02 AID-05 SIL-01 LAB-04

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3962

INFO AMEMBASSY LIMA

USMISSION GENEVA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 4895

NOFORN

EO 11652: GDS 2

TAGS: PINT, SHUM, CI

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE FOR UNHRC WORKING GROUP VISIT

REF: SANTIAGO 4836

SUMMARY. SENIOR OFFICIAL REPORTS FONMINISTER SUPPORTS
CREATION CHILEAN BLUE RIBBON PANEL TO INVESTIGATE HUMAN
RIGHTS SITUATION. END SUMMARY.

1. SENIOR FONMINISTRY OFFICIAL TOLD CHARGE TODAY, JULY 11,
THAT FONMIN CARVAJAL HAD ACCEPTED HIS PROPOSAL FOR CREATION
OF PANEL OF DISTINGUISHED CHILEANS TO INVESTIGATE HUMAN RIGHTS
SITUATION. ACCORDING TO SOURCE THERE IS AMPLE CHILEAN PRECEDENT
FOR CREATION OF PANEL OF THIS TYPE FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES. HE
SAID HE HAD EMPHASIZED THAT PANEL MEMBERS MUST BE TRULY
DISTINGUISHED CHILEANS WITH INTERNATIONAL REPUTATIONS AND
WITHOUT TIES TO GOC. PROPOSAL ENVISAGES THAT GOC WOULD
UNDERTAKE TO ACT IMMEDIATELY TO REMEDY SHORTCOMINGS IN
HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IDENTIFIED BY PANEL.

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2. SOURCE SAID THAT REACTION TO GOC DECISION NOT TO PERMIT

VISIT OF UNHRC WORKING GROUP IS DIVIDED SHARPLY BETWEEN CHILEANS WITH AWARENESS OF FOREIGN RELATIONS PROBLEMS AND THOSE LACKING SUCH AWARENESS. AMONG LATTER, THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE COUNTRY, THE DECISION WAS AN EXTREMELY POPULAR ONE; AMONG THE TINY MINORITY WHO MAKE UP THE FIRST GROUP THE DECISION WAS VERY BADLY RECEIVED. SOURCE SAID THIS NEGATIVE REACTION EVEN EXTENDED TO SOME MILITARY SECTORS SUCH AS COAJ (ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO JUNTA), BUT WITH THOSE PERSONS INDICATING DECISION IS NOT LAST WORD ON THIS SUBJECT.

3. SENSATIONALIST PRO-JUNTA "LA SEGUNDA" JULY 11 REPORTED THAT PERSON WHO SOUNDS LIKE SOURCE OF ABOVE REPORT HAD MADE SUCH RECOMMENDATION TO GOVERNMENT.

4. COMMENT. DETAILS OF PROPOSALS REPORTED REFTEL AND HERE DIFFER, BUT THEY SUGGEST ALTERNATIVES TO UNHRC WORKING GROUP VISIT ARE UNDER CONSIDERATION.

5. WE SHARE SOURCE'S ASSESSMENT THAT PINOCHET BAN ON UNHRC WORKING GROUP VISIT WAS A POPULAR DECISION. THAT FACT CONSTITUTES AN ADDITIONAL IMPEDIMENT TO ANY HOPE THAT PINOCHET MIGHT REVERSE HIMSELF.

6. SOME ALTERNATIVE ACTION MIGHT COMMEND ITSELF TO PINOCHET IF PROPOSED AS A MEANS OF COUNTERING WORST REACTION ABROAD TO CANCELLATION OF WORKING GROUP VISIT. STILL, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR PINOCHET AT THIS STAGE TO APPOINT PERSONS OF THE STATURE AND POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE AN EFFECTIVE COMMISSION WOULD REQUIRE. THIS CREATES DANGER HE MIGHT ACCEPT FORM OF PROPOSAL BUT NOT SUBSTANCE, I.E., APPOINT A PANEL OF OBSEQUIOUS NONENTITIES.

7. FOREIGN CRITICS MIGHT BE EXPECTED TO CONDEMN APPOINTMENT OF EVEN A TOP DRAWER COMMISSION AS AN ATTEMPTED WHITEWASH. NEVERTHELESS, IT SEEMS TO US THAT IF A COMMISSION OF REQUISITE CHARACTER WERE APPOINTED, ITS PROSPECTS OF ACTUALLY IMPROVING THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION HERE WOULD BE CONSIDERABLY GREATER THAN THOSE OF ANY NON-CHILEAN BODY.
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